

## PARIS

New social housing by Avenier Cornejo, KOZ, Maison Edouard François, SOA Architectes, Bourbouze & Graindorge, Ofis Arhitekti and Périphériques Architectes.

From this side of the Channel, the quality and quantity of social housing produced in France in recent years looks almost miraculous. Although locally there remains concern that supply does not meet demand, the numbers put this into context. At around one fifth of the total stock, the social rented sector represents a similar proportion to that in the UK, but current levels of production are significantly greater: in England, councils and housing associations build fewer than 25,000 new homes annually; in France, HLMs (Habitation à Loyer Modéré, the rough equivalents of Registered Social Landlords) have been producing around 120,000 per year for the past half-decade, and the present administration wants to see that rise to 150,000. A quarter of all new residential development in Paris must be social housing.

French critics are also concerned that while social housing has traditionally been a laboratory for architectural experiment – and helped to launch the careers of many well-regarded architects – the country is at risk of repeating the mistakes of the post-war housing boom, tolerating the ill-conceived and second-rate in its haste to build. In 2009, when the Paris-based Cité de l'architecture & du patrimoine ([www.citechaillot.fr](http://www.citechaillot.fr)) presented 15 recent works in the



the exhibition Towards a New Social Housing, curator Jean-François Pousse wrote: 'These are just a tiny fraction of what is being built, which is generally of a mediocre quality'. The warning is repeated in the museum's current exhibition, Towards a New Social Housing 2 (until July 2013), but the curators allow themselves to suggest that the works on show, characterised by bold and capable handling of material, form and typology, demonstrate to the wider public that 'architects have not renounced innovation in this field' despite regulatory and financial pressure – an observation borne out by the recent Paris schemes published here.

**Above** 10 dwellings on Rue Legendre by Avenier Cornejo, 2012 (ph: S Chalmeau).

**Below left** Housing by Hamonic & Masson, 2011 (ph: Sergio Grazia).

**Below** Tête en l'Air, 30 apartments by KOZ, 2012 (ph: Cecile Septet).







## Bourbouze & Graindorge Rue Rebière apartments

Won in competition, Bourbouze & Graindorge's 20-apartment residential scheme is part of a major housing initiative on Rue Rebière in the seventeenth arrondissement, which includes projects by EM2N, Atelier Bow Wow, and Provisional Workshop.

Intended to reflect the 'normal' rather than the 'special', the development is seen by the architect as a continuation of the high-quality post-war housing and urbanism undertaken by architects such as Jean Dubuisson, Marcel Lods, Fernand Pouillon and Guy Lagneau.

The 1850-square-metre development is split into two blocks in order to preserve views from the street to Les Batignolles Cemetery. A seven-storey building addresses the street, while a five-storey structure is turned through ninety degrees, providing views to the east and west. Both have generous balconies with polycarbonate balustrades to maximise daylight penetration into the apartments while preserving privacy for residents.

Profiled anodized aluminium cladding, with slim horizontal coverstrips at each floor level and powder-coated grey windows, give the scheme a cool, industrial aesthetic. Retractable yellow fabric canopies provide solar shading on the upper floors.

**Left/below** Views looking east and west along Rue Rebière (phs: Aymeric Fouquez); apartment with sliding-folding doors (ph: David Boureau).

